

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TANANA 00346 161436Z
ACTION AF-08

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E.O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MA, US
SUBJECT: CHARGE PAYS FAREWELL CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER

1. MY 45-MINUTE FAREWELL CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER RAKOTOMAVO,
FOR WHICH WE WERE GIVEN LESS THAN ONE HOUR'S NOTICE,
COVERED CURRENT STATUS OF US-MALAGASY RELATIONS.

2. TAKING MY LEAD FROM VARIOUS MESSAGES FROM THE DEPT, I
TOLD FOREIGN MINISTER THAT THE USG WAS PLEASED WITH SEEING
THE INITIAL STEPS TAKEN BY THE GDRM TO IMPROVE RELATIONS.
MOREOVER, USG IS PLEASED TO NOTE THAT THESE SMALL STEPS
APPARENTLY REFLECT A CHANGE OF ATTITUDE BY MALAGASY AUTHORI-
TIES WHICH WE TRUST WILL CONTINUE AND EXPAND.

3. I COMMENTED SPECIFICALLY ON THE IMPROVED TONE OF RADIO
MADAGASCAR SINCE MY CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER ON NOV 25,
WHEN THE LATTER AND I DISCUSSED ATTITUDINAL PROBLEMS. I
ALSO NOTED THAT PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY MALAGASY LEADERS HAVE
BECOME LESS HOSTILE TO THE US, BUT ADDED THAT THERE ARE
SOME GDRM PRACTICES WHICH WE FIND OBJECTIONABLE. I CITED
SEVERAL ACTIVITIES OF NORTH KOREANS IN TANANARIVE DURING
PAST SIX MONTHS WHICH HAVE INCLUDED SHARP ANTI-AMERICAN
PROPAGANDA THROUGH USE OF GDRM FACILITIES. RAKOTOMAVO
DID NOT COMMENT DIRECTLY, BUT HE APPEARED SURPRISED THAT
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I WOULD DARE TO RAISE SUCH A SUBJECT WITH HIM AND HE
MUTTERED SOMETHING ABOUT HOW MADAGASCAR HAS THROWN OFF
ITS COLONIALIST YOKE. I WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT IN US
EYES THE GDRM POLICY IS NOT YET ONE OF CLEAR NON-ALIGNMENT
OR "TOUS AZIMUTS", ALTHOUGH SOME SMALL PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE.

4. WE DID NOT DIRECTLY REFER TO MY DISCUSSIONS WITH

SOLOFOSON CONCERNING NASA. HOWEVER, I TOOK PARTICULAR NOTE OF THE UNRESOLVED MATTER OF INDEMNIFICATION FOR ESSO AND CALTEX, REMINDING THE MINISTER OF US LAW WHICH REQUIRES PROMPT, ADEQUATE AND EFFECTIVE INDEMNIFICATION OR US WOULD TAKE VARIOUS ACTIONS. BUT ABOVE ALL, I SAID, A COMPLETE IMPROVEMENT IN OFFICIAL GDRM ATTITUDE TOWARD THE US IS BOTH POSSIBLE AND NECESSARY IN ORDER TO RESOLVE OUTSTANDING ISSUES AND TO RETURN THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP TO A SOUND FOOTING. RAKOTOMAVO AGREED, ADDING THAT THE GDRM BELIEVES THE NEW US ADMINISTRATION APPEARS TO HAVE A PROFOUND UNDERSTANDING OF THE POLITICAL NEEDS OF THE VARIOUS PEOPLES IN THIS REGION, AND THEREFORE BOTH SIDES WILL BE WORKING IN THE SAME DIRECTION.

5. COMMENT: IN PREVIOUS MEETINGS WITH RAKOTOMAVO, I HAVE NOT FOUND HIM TO BE INCISIVE, NOR PARTICULARLY KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT FOREIGN AFFAIRS. HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS, EVEN AS LATE AS LAST WEEK WHEN HE RETURNED FROM TANZANIA AND MOZAMBIQUE, LEAVE MUCH TO BE DESIRED. HOWEVER, AT THIS MEETING, FOR THE FIRST TIME HE DID NOT SEEK TO BE CONTENTIOUS WITH REGARD TO ANY STATEMENT I MADE. HE IS, OF COURSE, ONLY MINDING THE STORE AND DOING THE NECESSARY ROUTINE WHILE PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA ENJOYS THE MORE GLAMOROUS ASPECTS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

6. I INTERPRET RAKOTOMAVO'S FRIENDLIER ATTITUDE TODAY TO BE THE RESULT OF A TREND INSIDE THE GDRM TO BE MORE FRIENDLY TO WESTERN COUNTRIES, WHILE NOT REDUCING THE LAVISH ATTENTION THE MALAGASY DISPOSE ON THE COMMUNIST

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COUNTRIES (FOR EXAMPLE, CUBAN LIBYAN AND YUGOSLAV DELEGATIONS PRESENTLY IN TANANARIVE.) IN MY ESTIMATION, RAKOTOMAVO IS NOT A SOURCE OF INFLUENCE TO BE RECKONED WITH INSIDE THE GDRM. SHEINBAUM

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